

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace paragraph [0131] with the following amended paragraph:

[0131] The rear 31 of the extruder housing 32 which is disposed within the bin 22 is capped at its back with an integral vertical wall 150 having a central hole 302 through which the drive shaft 86 passes. In order to form a thrust bearing surface, where the rear of the extruder screw contacts this rear vertical extruded housing wall, there is a stainless steel washer 155 ~~152~~ insert molded to the extruder housing's rear vertical wall 150 and a plastic bearing washer 154 snapped on the back of the extruder screw 30 (FIGS. 3 & 7).

Please replace paragraph [0132] with the following amended paragraph:

[0132] This plastic bearing washer 154 has densely packed bulls-eye-like concentric grooves 156 in its rear 31 flat surface which contact the metal washer 155 ~~152~~. These grooves 156 provide clearance for dry contents which might leak into the bearing area and get trapped between the two bearing surfaces 155 ~~152~~ 154. The grooves 156 are felt to be novel and substantially reduce both bearing wear and bearing noise in the dirty, dusty environment found within the mixing bin 22.

Response to 04/07/06 Office Action

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Please replace paragraph [0133] with the following amended paragraph:

[0133] The stainless steel washer 155 ~~152~~ both is frictionally compatible with the plastic bearing washing to provide a suitable bearing surface (as an example between acetyl for the plastic washer and the stainless steel for the metal washer), and helps to conduct away and dissipate heat which might otherwise build up in the bearing. Stainless steel is resistant to corrosion and expands relatively little when heated by bearing forces, thus making it further suitable.

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